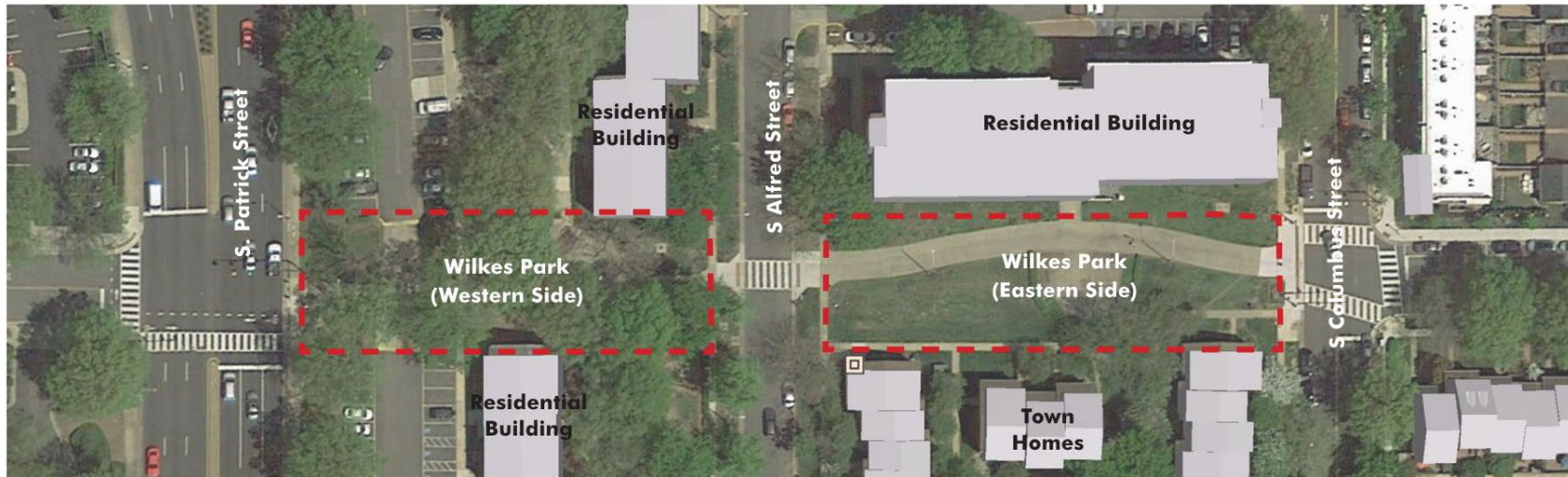


Wilkes Street Park Redesign

Park and Recreation Commission
February 18, 2021

Site Location



WILKES PARK LOCATION PLAN (EXISTING CONDITION)

Project Background

South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy

- The South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy states that the Wilkes Street Open Space “will be implemented by adjacent property owners through redevelopment with all applicable approvals.” (pg. 24)
- The City will lead a concept design of the two open spaces with the intention that the improvements would be implemented “in kind” by the adjacent property owners.
- The open space plans will contain a Phase I and Phase II design to allow for flexibility in implementation.



Design Guidelines

- Summer 2019, City staff met to learn about the park (staff from RPCA, Planning and Zoning, Transportation and Environmental Services, Archeology, Housing, etc.)
- Using each person's expertise, a list of design principles for the park was created

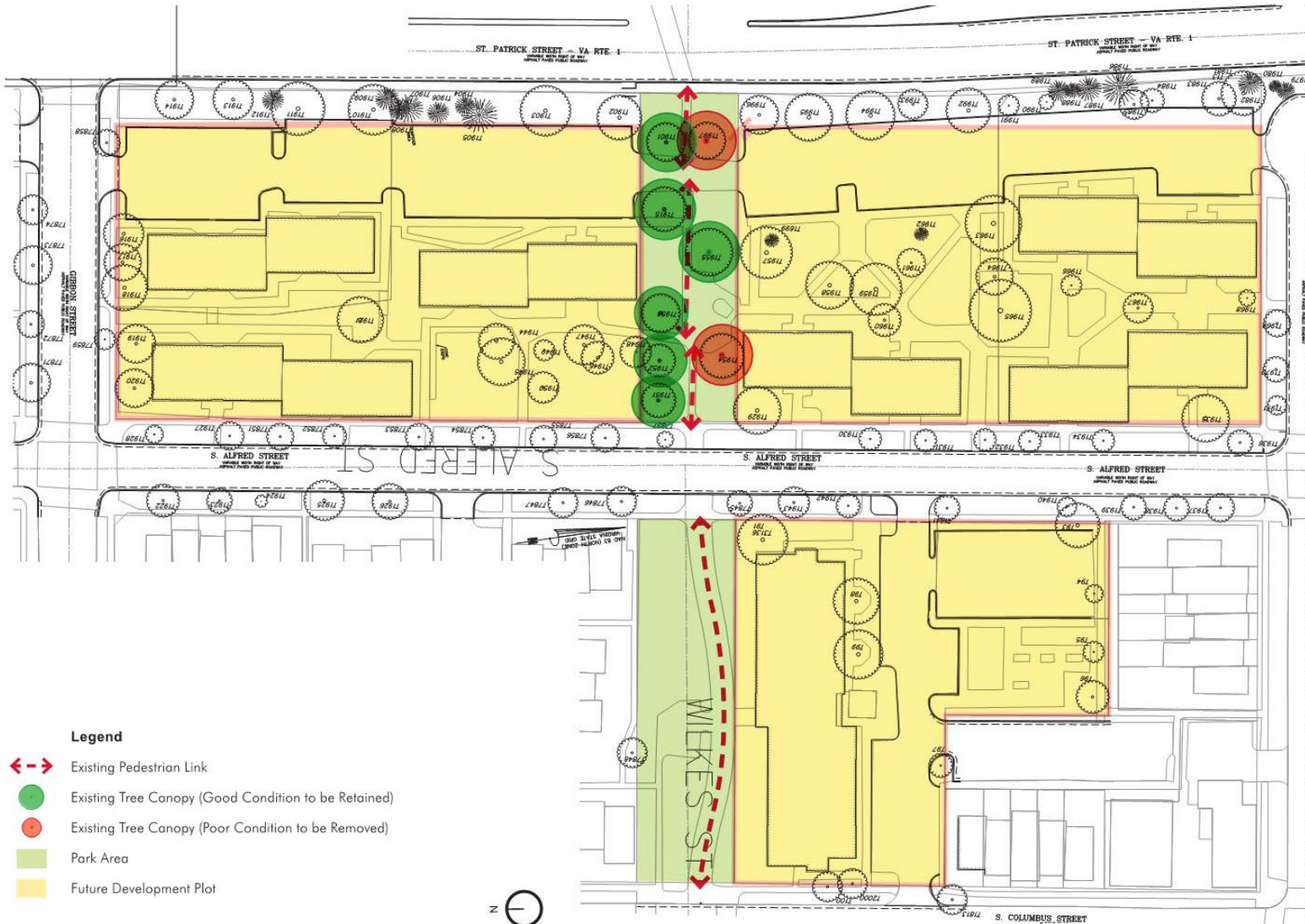


Community Surveys

Two online community surveys to collect input for the park's redesign

- First Survey:
 - Used to gain insight on what the community would like the park to look like
 - Survey was available from August 14 until September 11
 - Input collected was used to create three design proposals
- Second Survey:
 - Survey was longer and was used to have public weigh in on the two design options presented.
 - The second survey was open from November 6 until December 4
 - Survey results were almost equal, ultimately decided on Design 1
 - Contained transportation route, but allowed the park to still function as a park and not solely as a transportation route
 - The two paths reduce the amount of useable space in the park
 - Staff asked that the playspace be increased to accommodate neighborhood needs

Tree Preservation & Removal



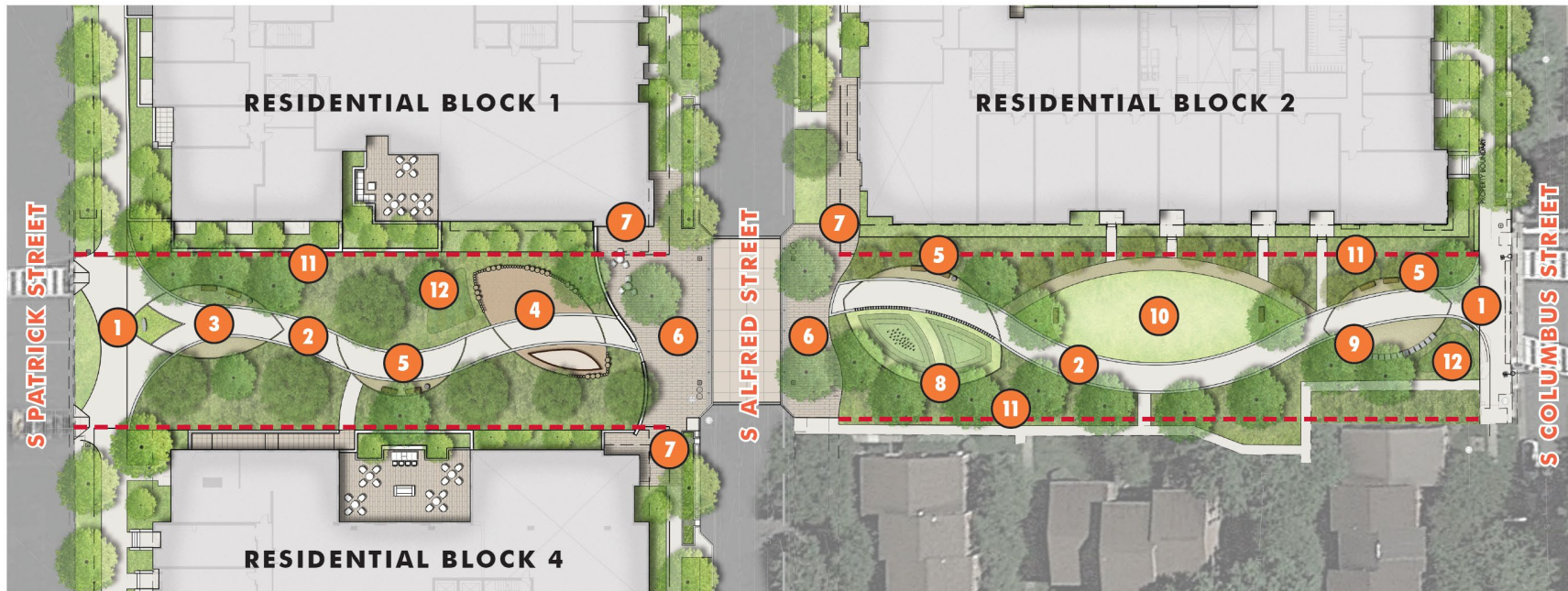
Final Design

HERITAGE AT OLD TOWN OVERALL SITE PLAN



Final Design

HERITAGE AT OLD TOWN WILKES PARK CONCEPT PLAN



Legend

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|---|
| 1 Park Gateway - Entry signage | 5 Resting Points | 9 Memorial Garden - Includes relocated veteran memorial rock. |
| 2 12' (W) Main Park Shared Route (Pedestrian & Bike) | 6 Plaza (Inc. Raised Table) | 10 Multiuse Lawn - includes picnic tables and seating |
| 3 Feature Arrival Area - Shade Structure & Seating | 7 Building Arrival | 11 Buffer Planting |
| 4 Nature Interpretation Area (All Ages) | 8 Play Area (All Ages) | 12 Stormwater Basin |

ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN
NOT TO SCALE



*Note; Wilkes Park Public Art component to be designed, located and installed through a separate process.

Park Planning Process

- **Pre Planning**
 - **August 13:** RPCA hosted a virtual kick-off meeting with the community.
 - **August 14 – September 11:** RPCA received input through Community Survey

- **Planning Process**
 - **September 17:** RPCA present the park project and survey results to the Park and Recreation Commission.
 - **September 18 – October 16:** Using the public input, the developer design team prepare design options for the park.
 - **November 5:** RPCA host a second community meeting with the applicant design proposals for the park.
 - **November 6 – December 4:** A second online survey and public engagement is conducted asking for community feedback on the design options.
 - **December – January:** Developer design team prepare a final park design using community input collected.
 - **January 21:** RPCA present final park design to the Park and Recreation Commission for public hearing.
 - **February 18:** RPCA present final park design to the Park and Recreation Commission for endorsement.

Commission Action

RECOMMENDATION: That the Park and Recreation Commission formally endorse the Wilkes Street Park design as presented by staff.

Appendix

First Survey

- Used to gain insight on what the community would like the park to look like
- Survey was available from August 14 until September 11
- Input collected was used to create three design proposals



CELEBRATE COMMUNITY



ACCESS + CONNECTIVITY



ACCESS TO NATURE

Option 1 Design



Legend

- 1 Park Gateway - Entry signage
- 2 10-12' (W) Main Park Shared Route (Pedestrian & Bike)
- 3 Feature Arrival Area - Shade Structure, Swings, Seating
- 4 Nature Play Area (All Ages)
- 5 Interpretation / Resting Points
- 6 Plaza (Raised Table)

- 7 Building Arrival
- 8 Memorial Garden - Includes relocated veteran memorial rock.
- 9 Multiuse Lawn - includes picnic tables and seating
- 10 Buffer Planting



Woodland



Bird Boxes



Pollinator Planting



Insect Hotel



Education Node

**Note: Wilkes Park Public Art component to be designed, located and installed through a separate process.*

Option 2 Design



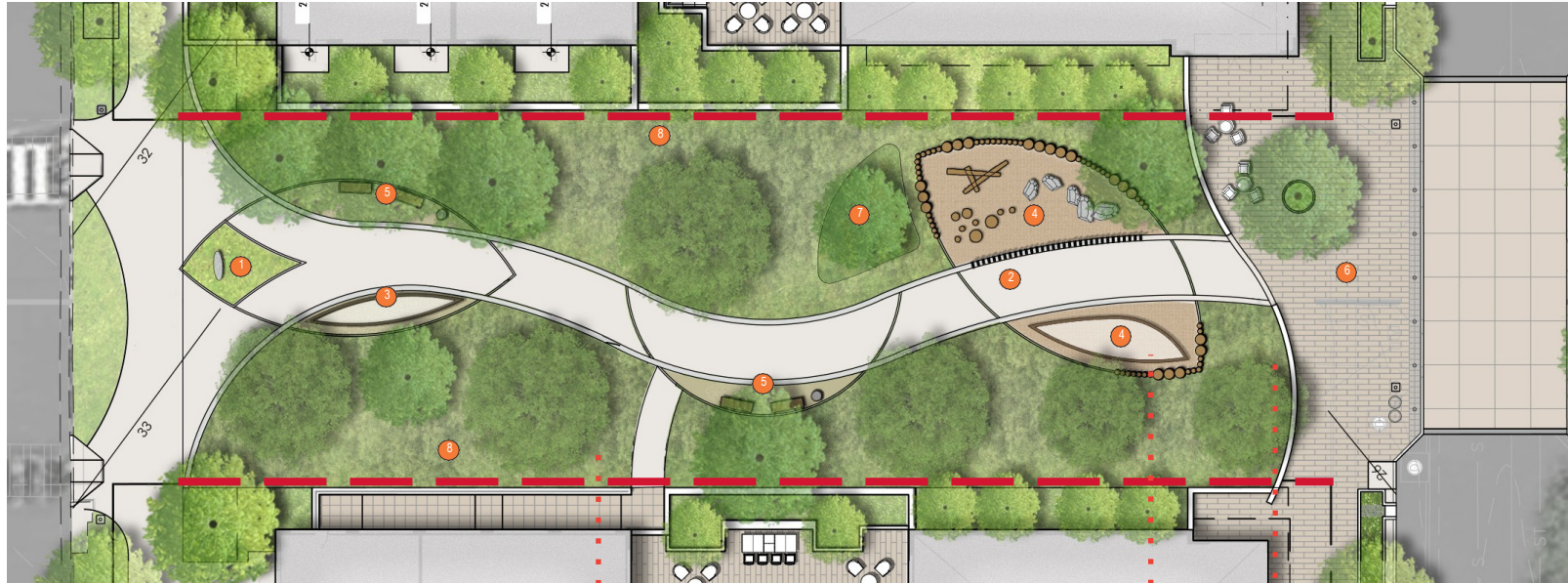
Legend

- | | | | |
|---|---|--------------|----------------|
| 1 Park Gateway - Entry Signage | 9 Plaza (Raised Table) | Woodland | Bird Boxes |
| 2 S Patrick's Plaza | 10 Building Arrival | Insect Hotel | Education Node |
| 3 5' (W) Pedestrian Park Pathway | 11 Memorial Garden - Relocated Veteran Memorial Rock. | | |
| 4 8' (W) 2-Way Cycle Route | 12 Picnic Area & Shelter | | |
| 5 Woodland Discovery with feature seating | 13 Multiuse Lawn | | |
| 6 Nature Play Area (All Ages) | 14 Buffer Planting | | |
| 7 Interpretation / Resting Point | | | |

*Note; Wilkes Park Public Art component to be designed, located and installed through a separate process.

HERITAGE AT OLD TOWN

BLOW-UP PARK PLAN (WESTERN)



ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN
NTS

Legend

- 1 Park Gateway - Entry signage
- 2 12' (W) Main Park Shared Route (Pedestrian & Bike)
- 3 Feature Arrival Area - Shade Structure & Seating
- 4 Nature Interpretation Area (All Ages)
- 5 Resting Points
- 6 Plaza (Inc. Raised Table)
- 7 Stormwater Basin
- 8 Woodland Planting Area



Woodland



Bird Boxes



Insect Hotel



Education Node

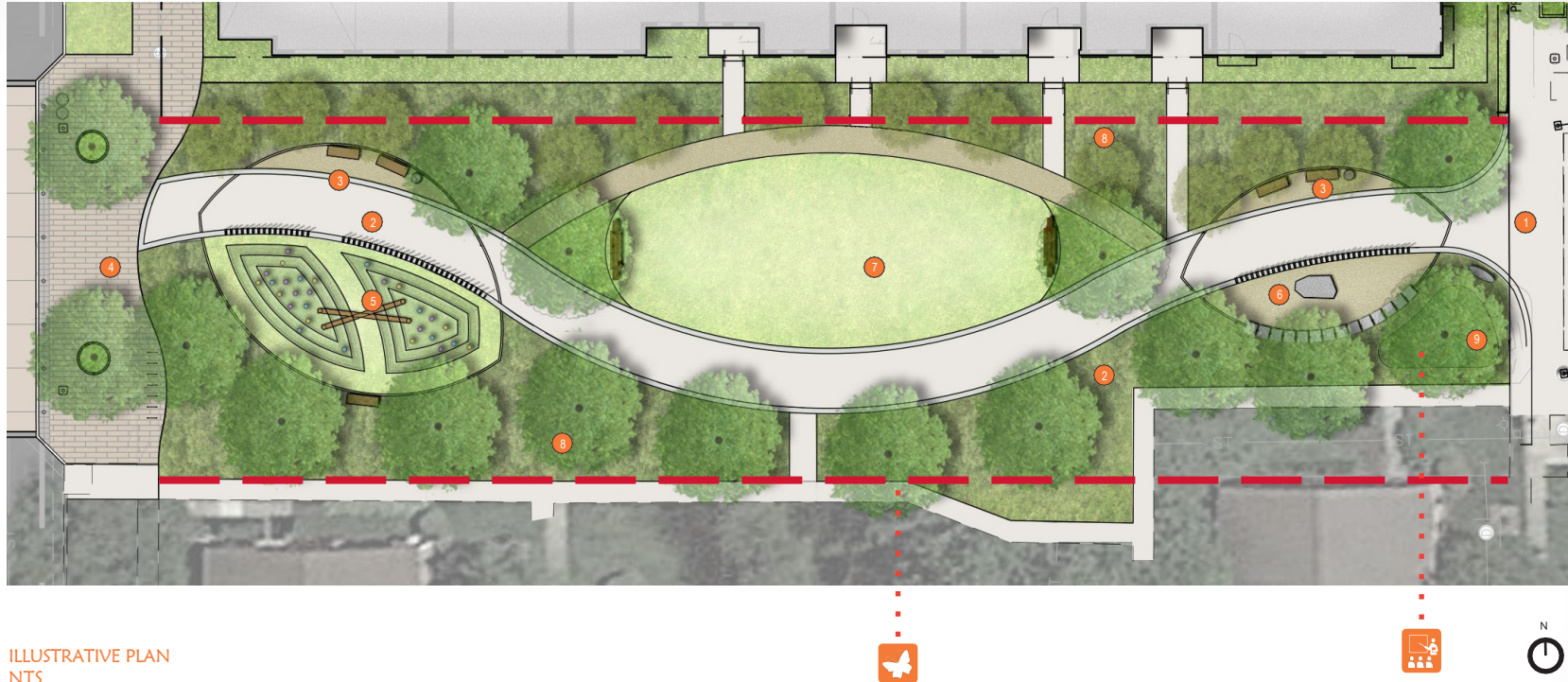


Property Line






HERITAGE AT OLD TOWN

BLOW-UP PARK PLAN (EASTERN)



ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN NTS

Legend

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|----------------|
| 1 | Park Gateway - Entry signage |  | Meadow |
| 2 | 12' (W) Main Park Shared Route (Pedestrian & Bike) |  | Education Node |
| 3 | Resting Points |  | Property Line |
| 4 | Plaza (Inc. Raised Table) | | |
| 5 | Play Area (All Ages) | | |
| 6 | Memorial Garden - Includes relocated veteran memorial rock. | | |
| 7 | Multiuse Lawn - includes feature swings | | |
| 8 | Meadow Planting Area | | |
| 9 | Stormwater Basin | | |

From: [Maxime Devilliers](#)
To: [Ana Vicinanza](#)
Subject: re: Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities Seeks Public Comment on Wilkes Street Park Redesign
Date: Wednesday, January 27, 2021 4:30:13 PM

Hi Ana,

My name is Max, I am a transportation planner, and I live at 401 Holland Lane. I walk through the Wilkes Street "Park" on a regular basis to get to the water, Safeway, friends' homes, basketball courts, and the Wilkes Street Tunnel. The "Wilkes Street Park" is anything but a park; it was created by the City/State/Feds decades ago to make Route 1 a highway through our city. Wilkes Street, which was originally laid out as part of the street grid, is now cut in half to allow drivers to speed through the City.

No matter what is done, Wilkes Street "Park" will never be a successful park because of its proximity to the highway that is Route 1 south of Duke Street. Walk down King Street, Cameron Street, Alfred Street, and many others to see what residents and visitors alike come to Old Town for--not an abundance of poorly maintained parks (or even well maintained ones), but a pleasant, walkable environment that doesn't make pedestrians and cyclists fear for their lives as they get around.

This "park" is a waste of the City's, as well as the developer's, time and money. We have an overabundance of useless pocket parks like this in the city. Wilkes Street should simply be reconnected as a street with safe pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure from Payne to the Tunnel. The City and the developer should not attempt to put an ill-fitting band-aid on an issue that can easily be resolved by simply bringing back what once was. By reducing the number of true four-way intersections there are along Route 1, the City is allowing drivers (many of which who do not live or work in the City) to pass by at an unsafe speed simply because of an archaic, ill-conceived, racist, highway plan for our nation.

I do not have a car and do not plan on getting one because I choose to live and work in walkable places. So I am not advocating for Wilkes Street to be reconnected for the ease of driving. I know that, as a transportation planner, pedestrian, and cyclist, it is far safer and more pleasant to walk along and across a roadway with frequent true four-way intersections than it is along and across one without, even if that means there are pedestrianized streets beyond.

The City of Alexandria is doing a great job at making the City more pedestrian and cyclist friendly which is why I chose to live here. But we cannot allow our successes on King Street and others to cloud our judgement and make penny wise, pound foolish decisions elsewhere. Reconnect the street grid (as DDOT and OP have been doing in DC for years now with great success) and the City and its residents/businesses will reap the benefits. If the Wilkes Street "Park" disappears, I can't imagine a soul who would miss it, except maybe those who know it means a longer wait at the lights on Route 1.

Best regards,
Max Devilliers
401 Holland Lane
Alexandria, VA 22314

From: caseykane50@gmail.com
To: [Ana Vicinanzo](#)
Subject: re: Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities Seeks Public Comment on Wilkes Street Park Redesign
Date: Saturday, January 30, 2021 11:18:43 AM

Hello Ana,

I am writing to request that any bollards that must be installed along the proposed Shared Route be properly signed and marked to ensure the safety of users. Also, request that the bollards be properly reflectorized.

Thank you,

Casey Kane

Sent from my iPad

From: [Ana Vicinanzo](#)
To: [Christina Schoeler Fischer](#)
Subject: RE: Wilkes Street Park Redesign
Date: Wednesday, February 3, 2021 3:16:00 PM

Good afternoon,

Thank you for your question. Natural play is the use of more natural play elements (logs, mounds, boulders, digging areas, small shelters or tunnels) and allows for imaginative play. They are intended to be playful and allow children to explore and take risks. Naturalistic playgrounds differ from traditional playgrounds because they don't use traditional metal and bright colored plastic play equipment. Judy Lowe Park, is an example of a naturalist playground that currently exists in Alexandria, you can find some examples images here.

https://www.google.com/maps/uv?pb=!1s0x89b7b11f48198a69%3A0xc34b0c1c07d6de17!3m1!7e115!4shhttps%3A%2F%2Fh5.googleusercontent.com%2Fp%2FAF1QipNIL6uFMN-42O-zSbnK0m6kpN2t5EubpB1swLF9%3Dw710-h400-k-no!5sjudy%20lowe%20park%20alexandria%20va%20-%20Google%20Search!1sCgIgAQ&imagekey=!1e10!2sAF1QipNIL6uFMN-42O-zSbnK0m6kpN2t5EubpB1swLF9&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewjBs_nHw87uAhUcEFkFHRsfDmQQoiowCnoECBAQAw

The nature interpretation area is intended to be a more educational node within the park. The space could be used to explain the stormwater management, plantings, or history of the park.

Please let me know if you have questions.

Thank you,

Ana

-----Original Message-----

From: Christina Schoeler Fischer <caschoeler@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 3, 2021 3:01 PM
To: Ana Vicinanzo <ana.vicinanzo@alexandriava.gov>
Subject: re: Wilkes Street Park Redesign

Hi Ana,

I was wondering what the play and nature interpretation areas will encompass as currently proposed?

Thanks,
Christina Schoeler

From: [Amber Phillips](#)
To: [Ana Vicinanzo](#)
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL]Wilkes Street Park redesign public comment
Date: Thursday, February 4, 2021 10:32:15 AM

Thank you, Ana, for considering my request for a playground like structure (even a small one or just one item for the kids to climb on) to replace the playground at the Heritage. Thank you

On Thu, Feb 4, 2021 at 10:14 AM Ana Vicinanzo <ana.vicinanzo@alexandriava.gov> wrote:

Good morning,

Thank you for your comments. I will forward them along to the Park and Recreation Commission for consideration. At this time, the playspace has not been designed – but that’s definitely something we can consider. There will be a playspace, an open lawn, and a more urban plaza area as part of the park’s design.

Please let me know if you have questions.

Thank you,

Ana

From: Amber Phillips <phillips.amber.j@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 4, 2021 4:56 AM
To: Ana Vicinanzo <ana.vicinanzo@alexandriava.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Wilkes Street Park redesign public comment

Hi Ana,

I live at 530 S Alfred St, right next to the proposed Wilkes St park. I have a two year old and a newborn, and our family would love to make sure there is space for our little kids to practice riding their scooters or bicycles without getting crushed by the rather heavy adult bicycle traffic that frequents that park now. We’d also love if the all-purpose play area could have some kind of structure for kids to climb on. If there’s room for a mini playground (like the one at the Heritage across the street), that would be great.

Thanks for considering my comments, and happy to help in any way I can

Amber Phillips

530 S Alfred St

Phillipsamberj@gmail.com

512.810.1852

--

Amber Phillips

amberjphillips.com

+1.512.810.1852

**DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a
trusted source.**